

FAB LES 27

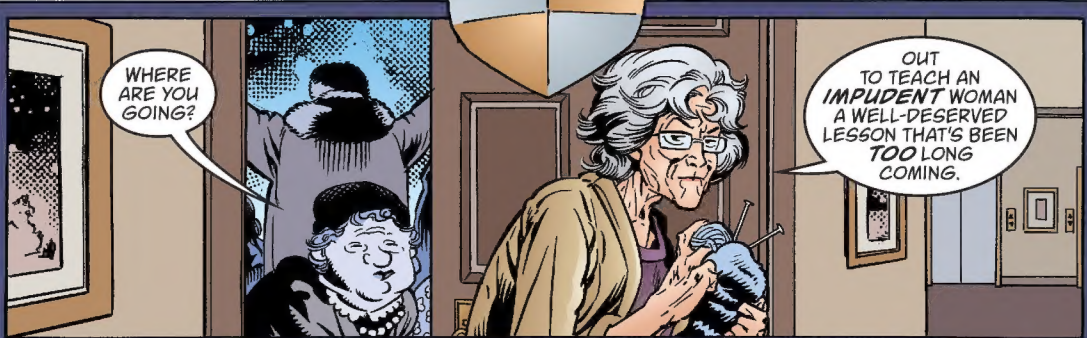


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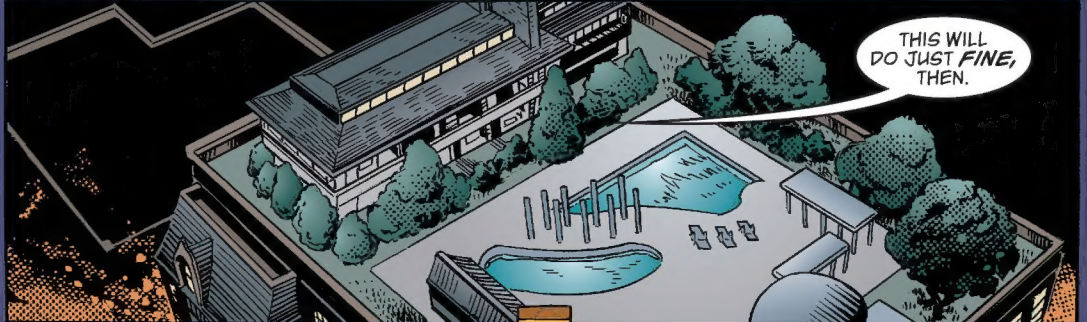
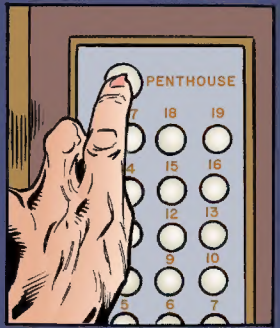
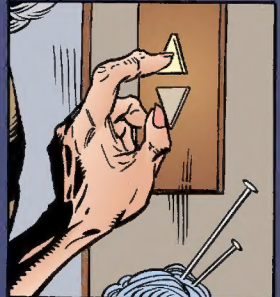
sep 04

BILL
WILLINGHAM
MARK
BUCKINGHAM
STEVE
LEIALOHA

SUGGESTED FOR
MATURE READERS
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OUT TO TEACH AN IMPUDENT WOMAN A WELL-DESERVED LESSON THAT'S BEEN TOO LONG COMING.





★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
★ IN LIKE A
★ LION - OUT
★ ON THE LAM

CHAPTER EIGHT ◦ MARCH
OF THE WOODEN SOLDIERS

BILL WILLINGHAM writer/creator
STEVE LEIALOHA inker
MARK BUCKINGHAM penciller
DANIEL VOZZO color/seps
TODD KLEIN lettering
JAMES JEAN MARIAM HUEHNER cover art assistant editor
SHELLY BOND editor



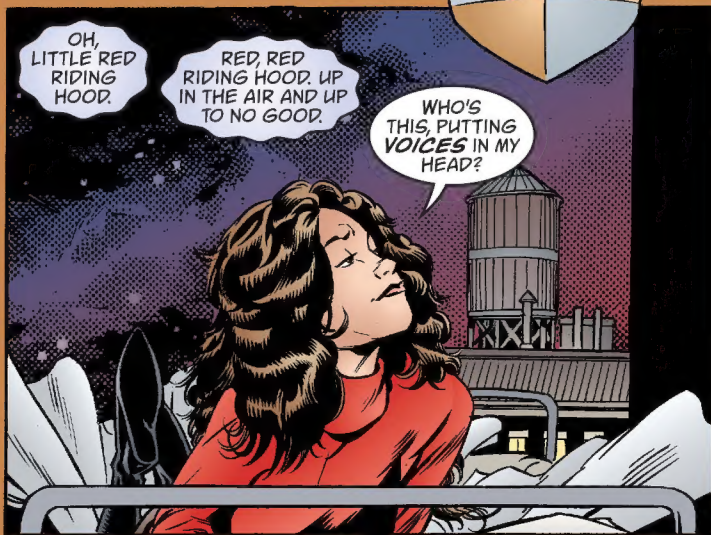
WEDNESDAY,
MARCH 27TH.

OH, THE
WEATHER OUTSIDE
IS FRIGHTFUL...



BATTLE DAY.

...BUT THE
FIRES ARE SO
DELIGHTFUL.



OH, LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD.

RED, RED RIDING HOOD. UP IN THE AIR AND UP TO NO GOOD.

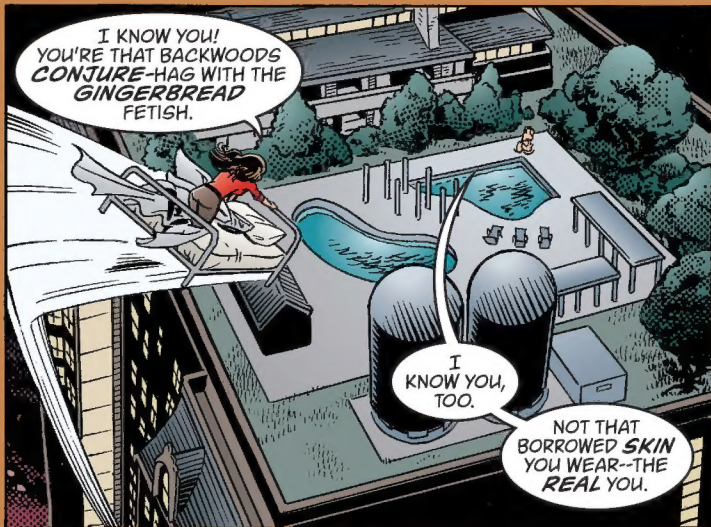
WHO'S THIS, PUTTING VOICES IN MY HEAD?



UP ON THE ROOFTOP, RED, RED RIDER IN THE SKY.

COME UP TO MEET ME. COME UP TO DIE.

WHO SPOUTS SUCH DOGGEREL?



I KNOW YOU! YOU'RE THAT BACKWOODS CONJURE-HAG WITH THE GINGERBREAD FETISH.

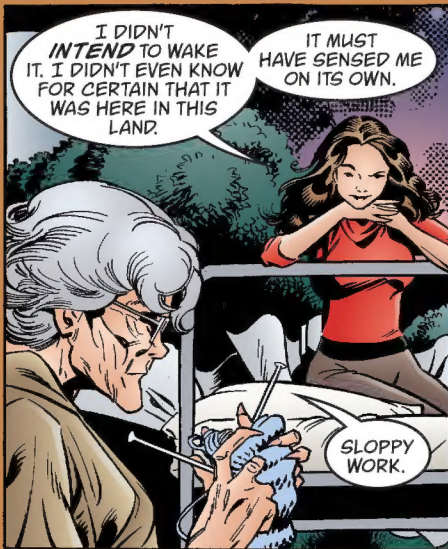
I KNOW YOU, TOO.

NOT THAT BORROWED SKIN YOU WEAR--THE REAL YOU.



I SENSED WHO YOU WERE THE MOMENT YOU WOKE UP THAT RIDICULOUS CHICKEN HUT OF YOURS.

BABA YAGA.



I DIDN'T INTEND TO WAKE IT. I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW FOR CERTAIN THAT IT WAS HERE IN THIS LAND.

IT MUST HAVE SENSED ME ON ITS OWN.

SLOPPY WORK.



YOUR SUMMONING RHYMES WERE INSIPID.



NOT MY INTENTION.

I CRAFT MY MESSAGES IN PLAIN LANGUAGE, BUT SOME BUG IN THE SPELL I COULD NEVER CORRECT THEM IN BAD VERSE.

SLOPPY WORK.



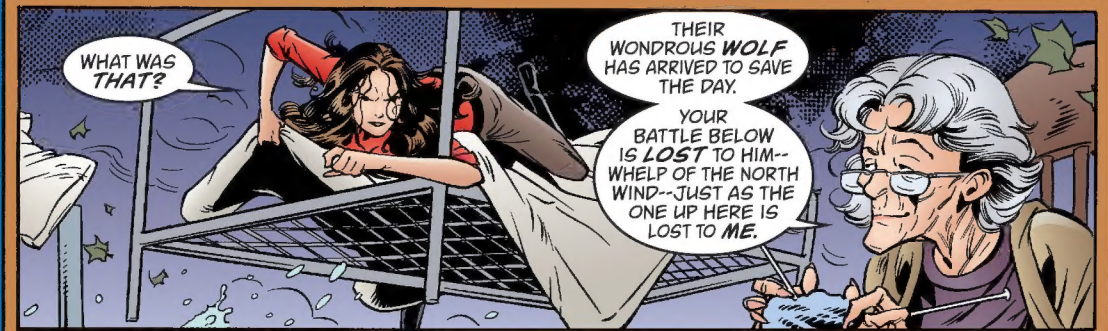
TOUCHÉ.

WHY ARE WE HERE? I HAVE A BATTLE TO ATTEND TO DOWN BELOW.

NO, YOUR FIGHT'S HERE WITH ME.



NONSENSE, I--



WHAT WAS THAT?

THEIR WONDROUS WOLF HAS ARRIVED TO SAVE THE DAY.

YOUR BATTLE BELOW IS LOST TO HIM--WHELP OF THE NORTH WIND--JUST AS THE ONE UP HERE IS LOST TO ME.



AND NOW, LET'S HAVE SOME RAIN TO PUT OUT LINGERING FIRES.

YOU'RE SHOWING OFF, FRAU TOTENKINDER, IN YOUR LAST MINUTES OF LIFE.

YOU'D ACTUALLY DUEL WITH ME? YOU WERE NEVER IN MY LEAGUE!



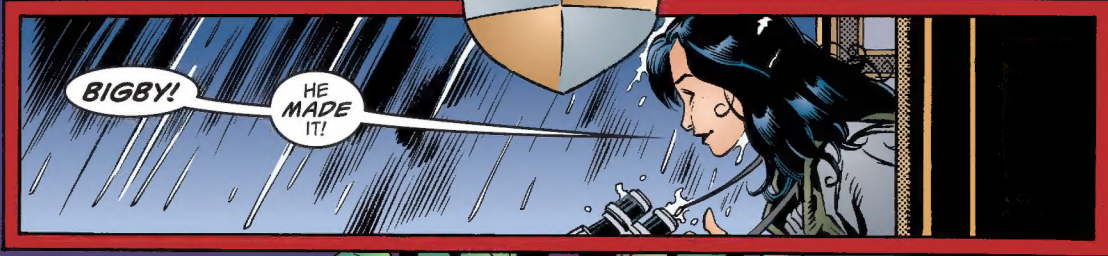
PERHAPS NOT, IN THE OLD DAYS, IN THE OLD LANDS. BUT YOU'RE A STRANGER HERE, IN THIS SMALL SPOT OF EARTH, WHERE I'VE HAD CENTURIES TO WEAVE AND KNIT EVERY POSSIBLE SPELL OF ADVANTAGE.

YOU'VE STUMBLER INTO MY PLACE OF POWER, FOOLISH WOMAN.



FINE, THEN LET'S BE AT IT.

THIS ENDLESS CONVERSATION BORES ME.



BIGBY!

HE MADE IT!



BIGBY! GOD BLESS YOUR MOST TIMELY ARRIVAL!

I HAVE TO CONFESS I NEVER THOUGHT I'D BE SO PLEASED TO SEE YOU, YOU OLD DOG.

TIME LATER FOR CELEBRATIONS.

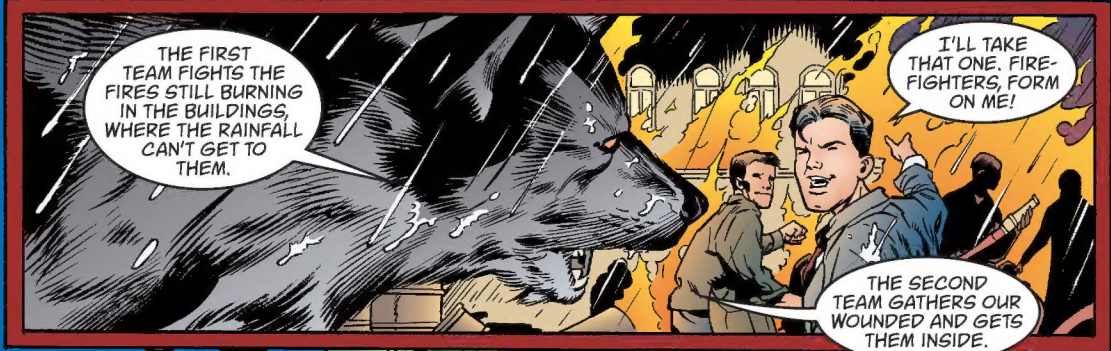
WE'VE GOT TOO MUCH WORK TO DO.

DIVIDE INTO THREE TEAMS.



YOU CAME!

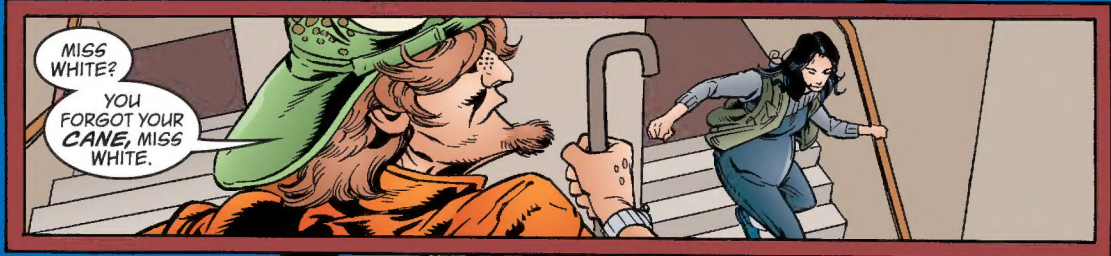
MISS WHITE?



THE FIRST TEAM FIGHTS THE FIRES STILL BURNING IN THE BUILDINGS, WHERE THE RAINFALL CAN'T GET TO THEM.

I'LL TAKE THAT ONE. FIRE-FIGHTERS, FORM ON ME!

THE SECOND TEAM GATHERS OUR WOUNDED AND GETS THEM INSIDE.



MISS WHITE?

YOU FORGOT YOUR CANE, MISS WHITE.



AND THE THIRD GROUP INSPECTS THE WOODEN SOLDIERS. EXAMINE EACH ONE CAREFULLY.

MAKE SURE THEIR HEADS ARE REMOVED, NO MATTER HOW DEAD THEY MAY SEEM.



WE'LL DO THAT--COLLECT THE HEADS.

STORE THEM INSIDE, IN ONE OF THE ROOMS OFF THE BUSINESS OFFICE--FAR AWAY FROM THEIR BODIES.

BIGBY!





I KNEW IT.

SNOW?

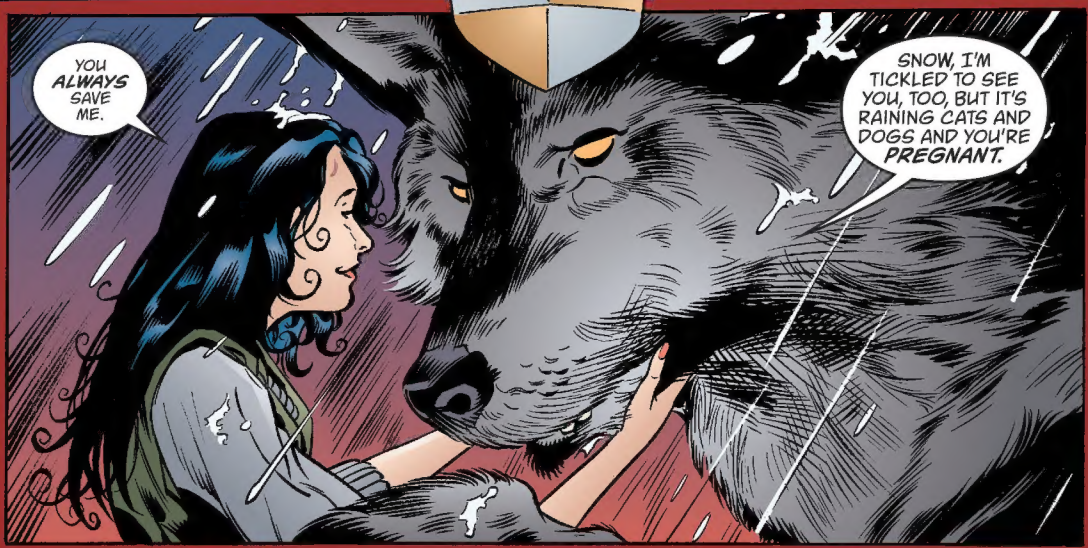
I **KNEW** YOU'D COME IN TIME TO SAVE US!

YOU ALWAYS DO!

MISS WHITE!

GOLLY!





YOU ALWAYS SAVE ME.

SNOW, I'M TICKLED TO SEE YOU, TOO, BUT IT'S RAINING CATS AND DOGS AND YOU'RE PREGNANT.



THINK OF THE CUB. GET YOURSELF INDOORS THIS INSTANT.

WOW! DID YOU SEE THAT?



FLY, TAKE SNOW BACK INSIDE.

MY SISTER IS SUDDENLY SO TOTALLY-ANIMAL.



NOW, PEOPLE, LET'S GET BACK TO WORK. THE BATTLE MAY BE OVER, BUT NOT THE FIGHT.

WHO'D'VE EVER GUESSED?



THURSDAY, MARCH 28TH. JUST AFTER TWO IN THE MORNING.

THE LONG NIGHT WEARS ON.



DID YOU SEE THAT, FLYCATCHER?

A LIGHTNING STRIKE, BUT REAL CLOSE THIS TIME. MAYBE ON OUR OWN ROOF.

DO YOU THINK WE SHOULD CHECK IT OUT?



STAY HERE. HOLD THE ELEVATOR.

I'LL INVESTIGATE.



CAREFUL, YOUR HONOR.



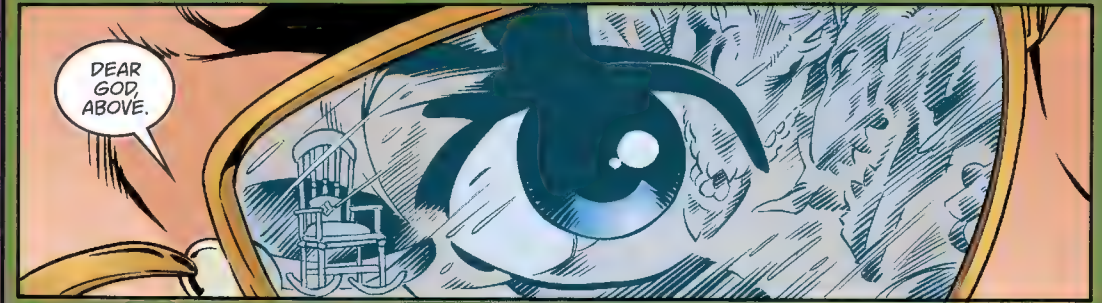
WHAT IS THAT?

IS SOMEONE OUT THERE?





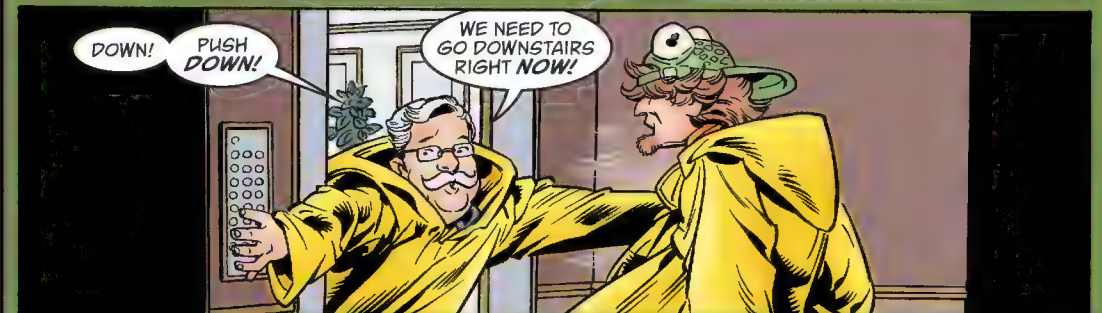
OH NO.



DEAR GOD ABOVE.

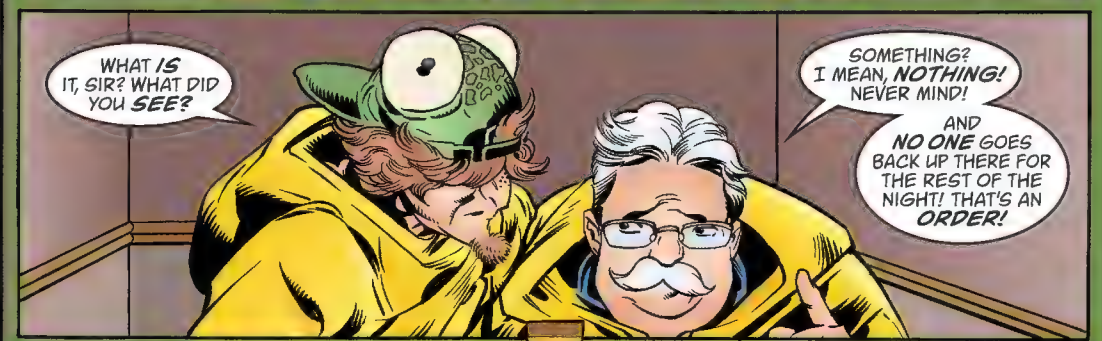


FLY!



DOWN! PUSH DOWN!

WE NEED TO GO DOWNSTAIRS RIGHT NOW!



WHAT IS IT, SIR? WHAT DID YOU SEE?

SOMETHING? I MEAN, NOTHING! NEVER MIND!

AND NO ONE GOES BACK UP THERE FOR THE REST OF THE NIGHT! THAT'S AN ORDER!



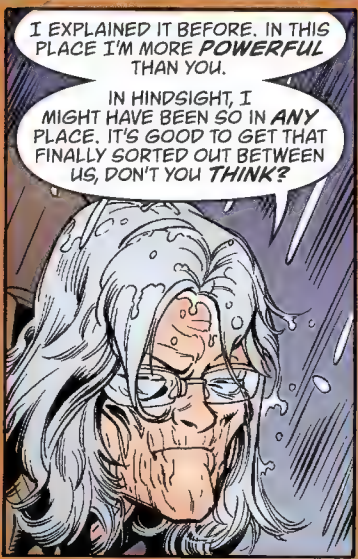
HOW?



EXCUSE ME?

I CAN'T QUITE MAKE OUT WHAT YOU'RE SAYING.

HOW DID YOU DO THIS?



I EXPLAINED IT BEFORE. IN THIS PLACE I'M MORE POWERFUL THAN YOU.

IN HINDSIGHT, I MIGHT HAVE BEEN SO IN ANY PLACE. IT'S GOOD TO GET THAT FINALLY SORTED OUT BETWEEN US, DON'T YOU THINK?

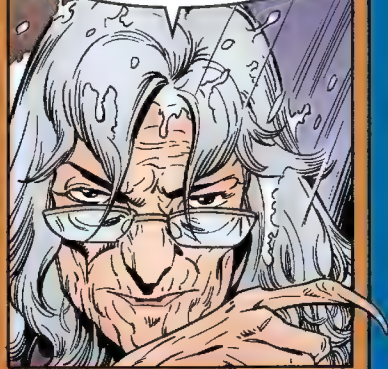


BUT I--I WAS ALWAYS--

I KNOW YOU WERE IN SO MANY STORIES--SO MANY FEARED AND SO WELL KNOWN.

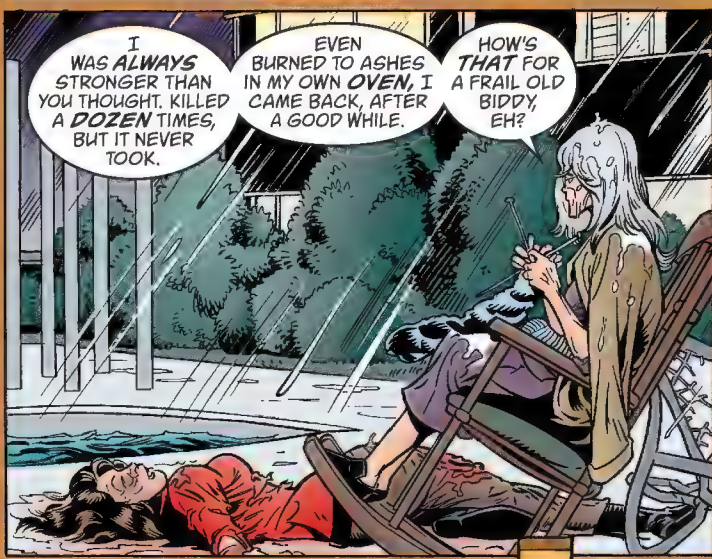
PERSONALLY, I NEVER THOUGHT MUCH OF THAT "POPULARITY EQUALS POWER" NONSENSE.

IT'S NEVER BEEN TESTED UNDER CONTROLLED CONDITIONS.
I'VE TRIED TO STAY OUT OF THE STORIES, MYSELF. I PREFER ANONYMITY, AND MY OWN COUNSEL.



"AND IN THAT ONE STORY THEY SIMPLY WON'T FORGET, AT LEAST THEY NEVER KNEW MY NAME."

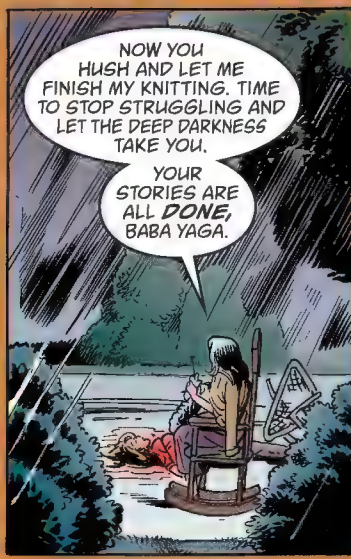
"COULD HAVE BEEN ANY OLD WITCH IN THE WOODS."



I WAS ALWAYS STRONGER THAN YOU THOUGHT. KILLED A DOZEN TIMES, BUT IT NEVER TOOK.

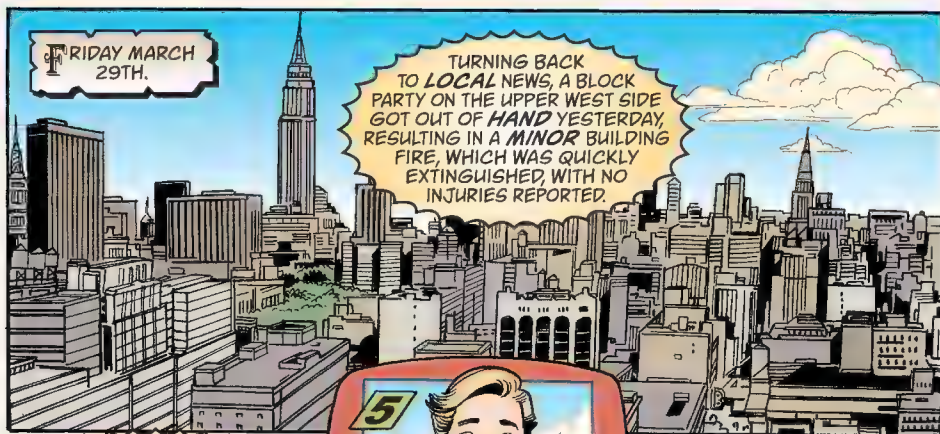
EVEN BURNED TO ASHES IN MY OWN OVEN, I CAME BACK, AFTER A GOOD WHILE.

HOW'S THAT FOR A FRAIL OLD BIDDY, EH?



NOW YOU HUSH AND LET ME FINISH MY KNITTING. TIME TO STOP STRUGGLING AND LET THE DEEP DARKNESS TAKE YOU.

YOUR STORIES ARE ALL DONE, BABA YAGA.



FRIDAY MARCH 29TH.

TURNING BACK TO LOCAL NEWS, A BLOCK PARTY ON THE UPPER WEST SIDE GOT OUT OF **HAND** YESTERDAY, RESULTING IN A **MINOR** BUILDING FIRE, WHICH WAS QUICKLY EXTINGUISHED, WITH NO INJURIES REPORTED.

AND IN **OTHER** NEWS, A FAMILY'S ROOFTOP BARBECUE COOKOUT GOT OUT OF CONTROL YESTERDAY, ON THE UPPER WEST SIDE, RESULTING IN A **MINOR** BUILDING FIRE, WHICH WAS QUICKLY EXTINGUISHED.



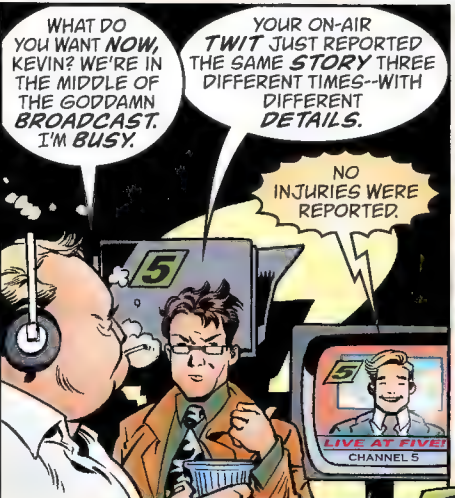
NO INJURIES WERE REPORTED.

AND IN OTHER NEWS...



DO YOU HEAR HIM, MIKE? DO YOU HEAR WHAT YOUR REPORTER IS SAYING?

...A SCUFFLE BETWEEN TWO UPPER WEST SIDE STREET GANGS GOT OUT OF CONTROL YESTERDAY, RESULTING IN A **MINOR** BUILDING FIRE, WHICH WAS QUICKLY EXTINGUISHED.



WHAT DO YOU WANT **NOW**, KEVIN? WE'RE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE **GODDAMN BROADCAST**. I'M BUSY.

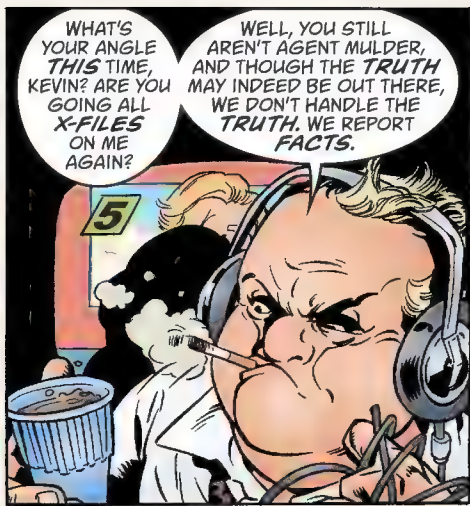
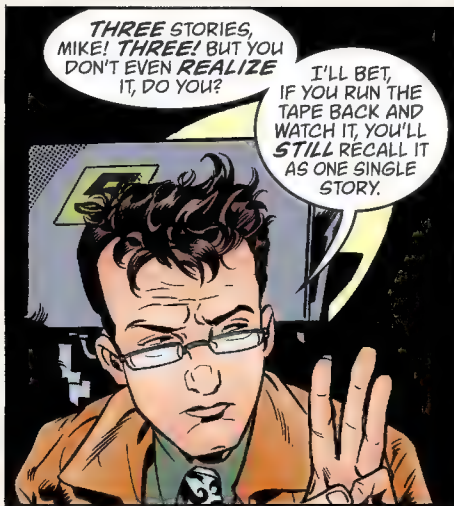
YOUR ON-AIR **TWIT** JUST REPORTED THE SAME **STORY** THREE DIFFERENT TIMES--WITH DIFFERENT **DETAILS**.

NO INJURIES WERE REPORTED



DOESN'T THAT SEEM JUST A BIT **ODD** TO YOU? TO ANYONE?

THAT WE'D REPORT A **MINOR LOCAL** STORY? IT'S A SLOW NEWS DAY, KEVIN.



SATURDAY,
MARCH 30TH.

WHAT ARE
WE GOING TO DO,
SNOW?

REBUILD.
GO ON.

THESE
BUILDINGS WERE
CONSTRUCTED LONG
AGO WHEN THINGS WERE
STILL BUILT TO LAST.
THEY LOOK BAD NOW,
BUT THEY'RE
SOUND.

WE'LL
FIX
THEM.

NOO'S
BOOKS

14

FOR

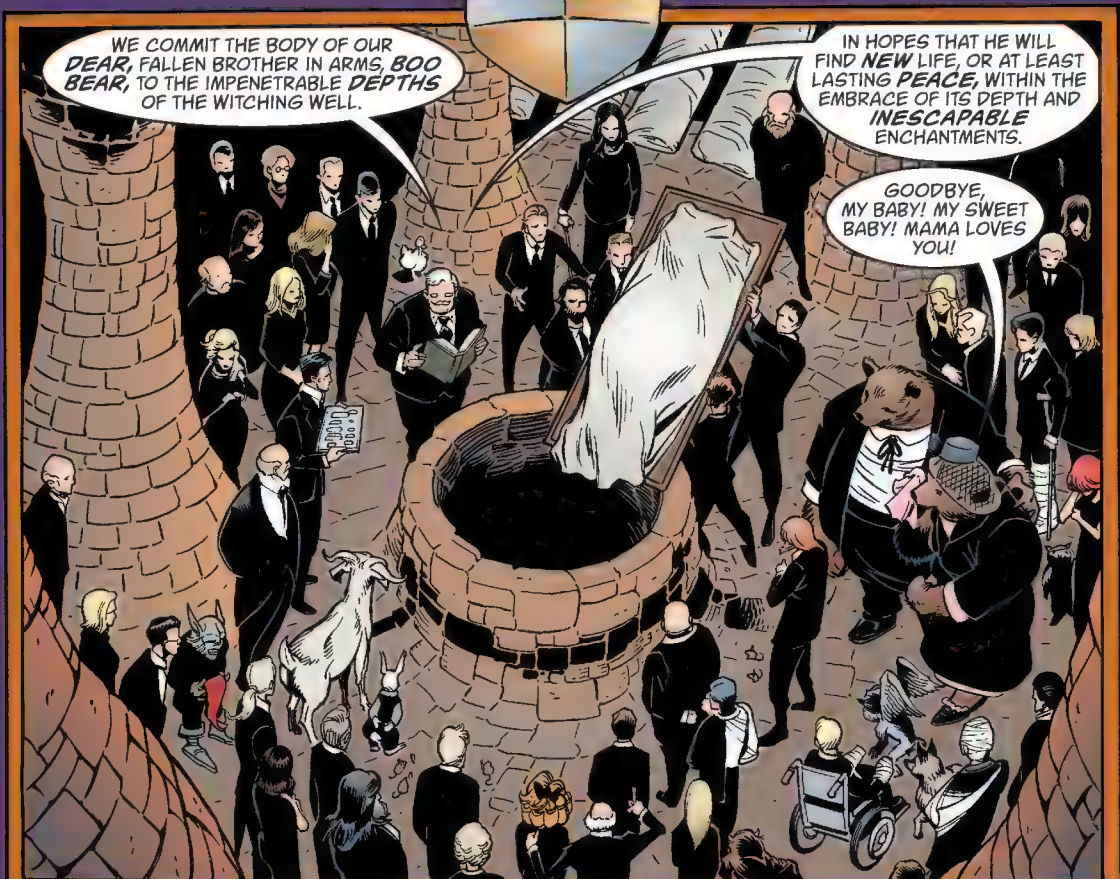
LAUNDROMAT

ANT

AFTER
WE BURY OUR
DEAD?

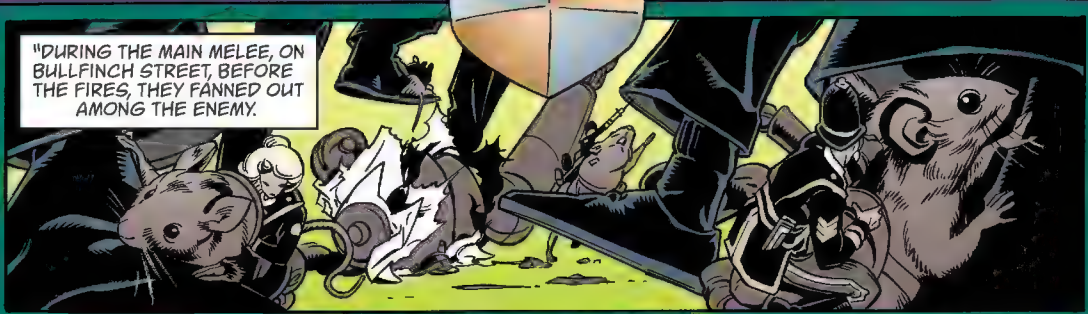
IS IT
TIME?

YEAH. WE
SHOULD GO IN
NOW.





"DURING THE MAIN MELEE, ON BULLFINCH STREET, BEFORE THE FIRES, THEY FANNED OUT AMONG THE ENEMY."



"EACH TEAM SCRAMBLED UP AN INDIVIDUAL SOLDIER'S PANTS LEG..."



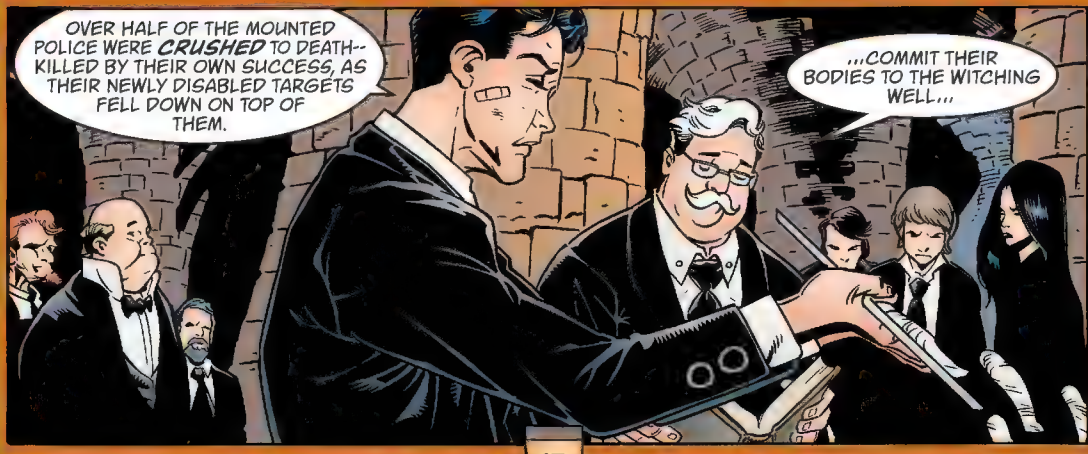
"...PRYING LOOSE THE PINS CONNECTING THEIR KNEE JOINTS..."



"...CRIPPLING THEM AS THEY ADVANCED ON US."



OVER HALF OF THE MOUNTED POLICE WERE **CRUSHED** TO DEATH--KILLED BY THEIR OWN SUCCESS, AS THEIR NEWLY DISABLED TARGETS FELL DOWN ON TOP OF THEM.



"...COMMIT THEIR BODIES TO THE WITCHING WELL..."



WHO'S THIS?

RIDING HOOD'S BODY.

WHAT?!



YOU'RE GOING TO PUT THAT WITCH'S CORRUPT, **FESTERING** CARCASS DOWN THERE WITH MY OWN **SON?**

AND WITH MISTER WEYLAND AND ALL THE OTHER GOOD FABLES?



WE HAVE TO. I'M SORRY BUT SHE'S TOO DANGEROUS.

THIS IS THE ONLY WAY TO ENSURE SHE CAN NEVER COME BACK TO TROUBLE US AGAIN.



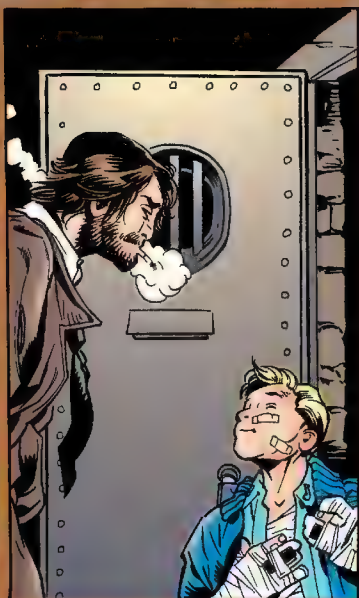
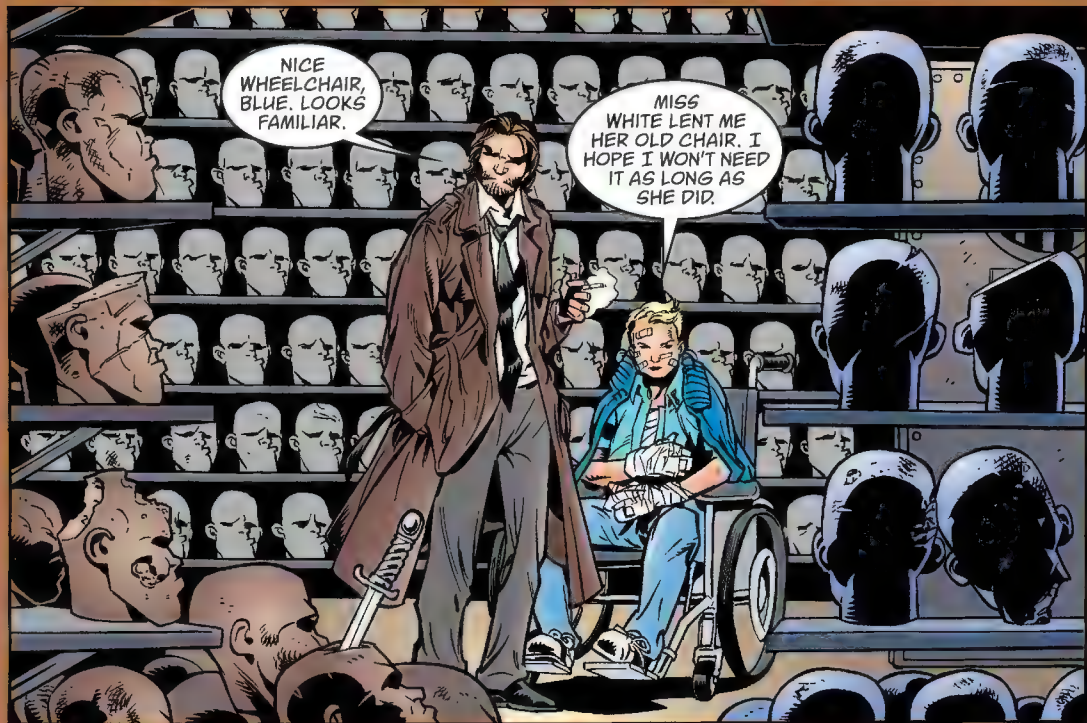
DO IT, THEN-- BUT DON'T SAY NO FANCY WORDS.

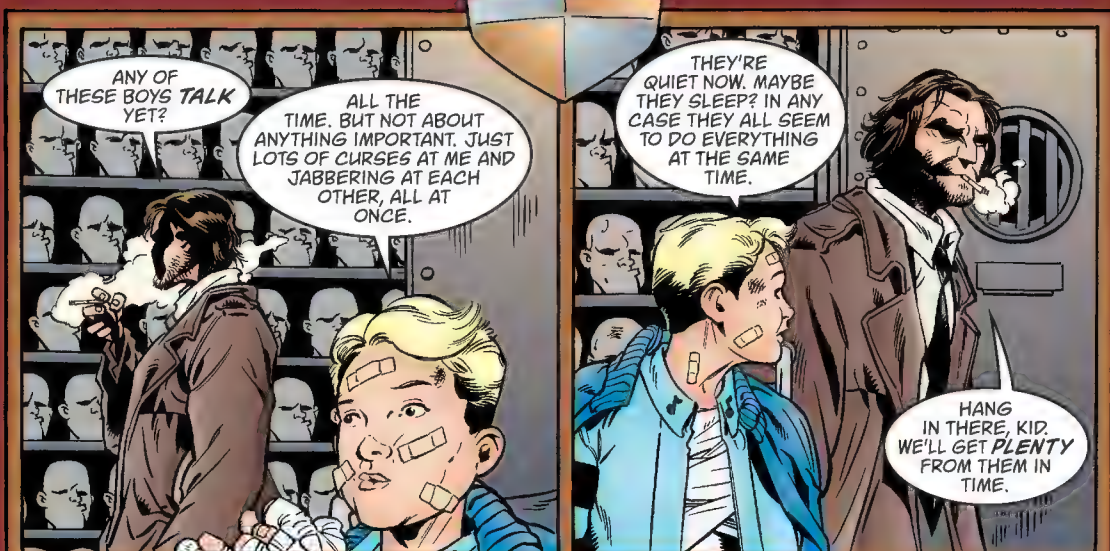
NOT FOR SUCH AS **HER.**



THIS IS OUR DIRE **ENEMY**--A MOST **WRETCHED** WOMAN WHOM WE WILL NOT NAME.

IF THERE'S **ANYTHING** DOWN THERE THAT CAN CAUSE HER ETERNAL PAIN AND TORTURE, BE OUR **GUEST.**





ANY OF THESE BOYS TALK YET?

ALL THE TIME. BUT NOT ABOUT ANYTHING IMPORTANT. JUST LOTS OF CURSES AT ME AND JABBERING AT EACH OTHER, ALL AT ONCE.

THEY'RE QUIET NOW. MAYBE THEY SLEEP? IN ANY CASE THEY ALL SEEM TO DO EVERYTHING AT THE SAME TIME.

HANG IN THERE, KID. WE'LL GET PLENTY FROM THEM IN TIME.



WE'VE GOT NOTHING BUT TIME.



HOW'S OUR FAUX RIDING HOOD DOING?

SHE'S ALIVE-- SURPRISINGLY ENOUGH-- BUT POWERLESS.



I DRAIN HER MAGIC AWAY EVERY DAY. SHE'LL REMAIN HELPLESS AS LONG AS WE NEED HER.

MIGHT BE YEARS TO COME.

I'M PATIENT.



CAN SHE HEAR ME?

OH YES.

LISTEN UP BABA YAGA. YOU'RE ALL ALONE NOW. NO ONE EVEN KNOWS YOU'RE STILL ALIVE, EXCEPT ME AND FRAU TOTENKINDER.



NO FOOD, NO COMFORT, NO ENTERTAINMENT AND NO COMPANY, EXCEPT US. THAT WILL NEVER CHANGE.

SO LET ME KNOW WHEN YOU'RE READY TO TALK--ABOUT THE ADVERSARY, OR SOMETHING ELSE.



I KNOW YOU THINK YOU'LL HOLD OUT, BUT NO ONE DOES FOR LONG.

EVENTUALLY YOU'LL TELL ME EVERYTHING.

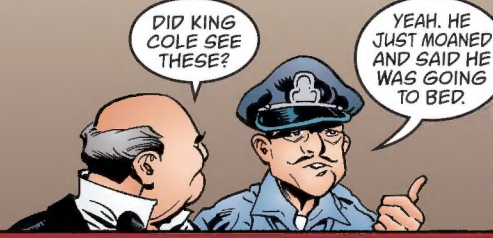


UNTIL THEN, ENJOY YOUR STAY.





MARCH 31ST, AND THE MANY DAYS BEYOND.



DID KING COLE SEE THESE?

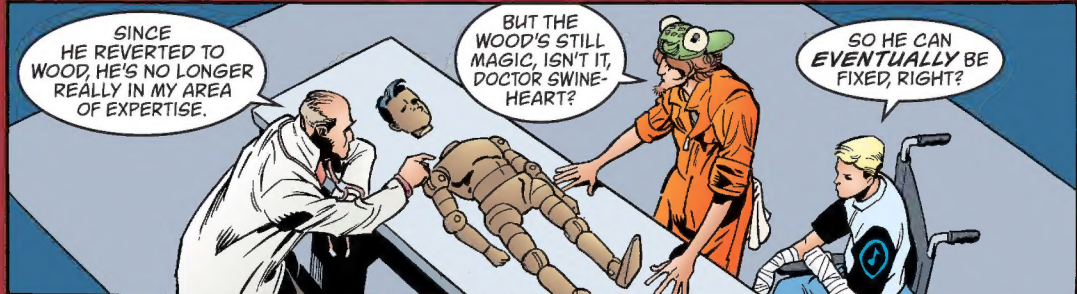
YEAH. HE JUST MOANED AND SAID HE WAS GOING TO BED.

VOTE for Prince Charming

Hero of the Battle of **FABLETOWN**

VOTE for King Cole

Hero of the Battle of **FABLETOWN**



SINCE HE REVERTED TO WOOD, HE'S NO LONGER REALLY IN MY AREA OF EXPERTISE.

BUT THE WOOD'S STILL MAGIC, ISN'T IT, DOCTOR SWINE-HEART?

SO HE CAN EVENTUALLY BE FIXED, RIGHT?



SAD AGAIN, MAMA?

MELANCHOLY, I GUESS. I WAS THINKING OF BOO, DO YOU STILL THINK OF BOO, PAPA?

EVERY DAY, MAMA.

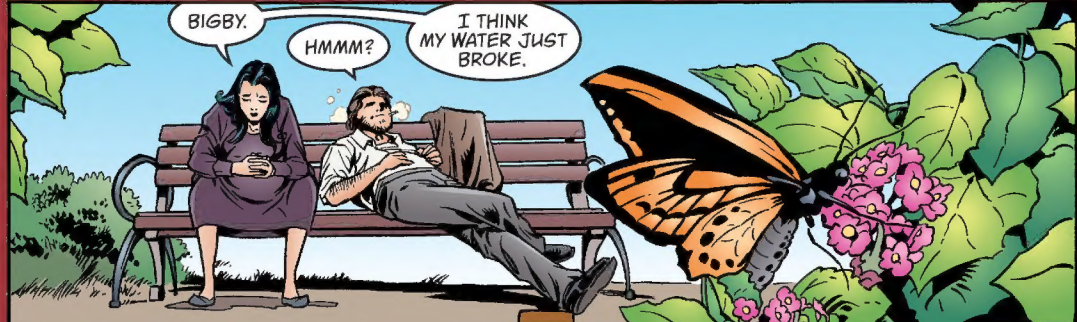
I'M PREGNANT, PAPA.



WHAT'S WRONG, MISS RED?

WHY'RE YOU CRYING, BOSS?

NO REASON, REALLY. I JUST MISS WEYLAND.



BIGBY.

HMMM?

I THINK MY WATER JUST BROKE.

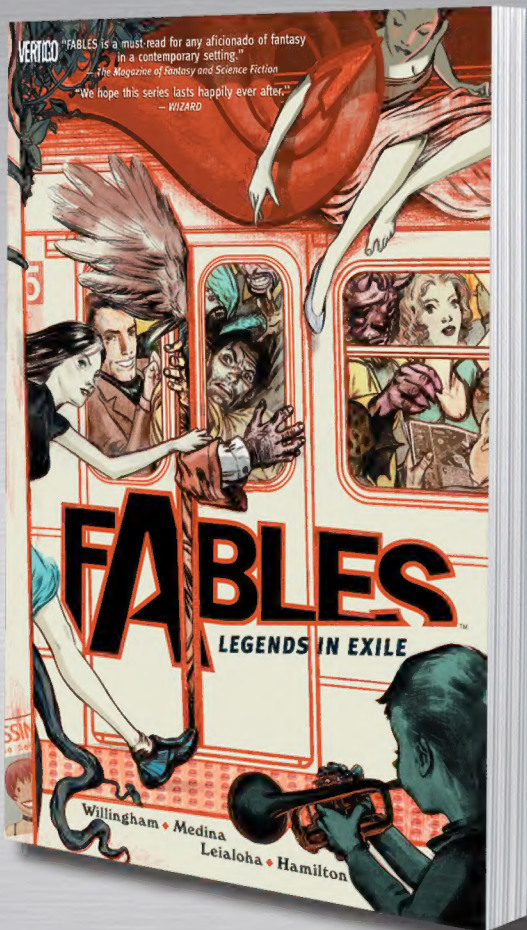
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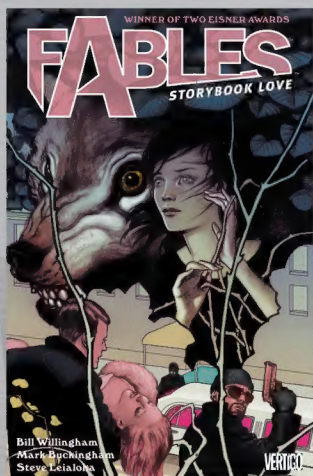
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- VOL. 4: MARCH OF THE WOODEN SOLDIERS**
- VOL. 5: THE MEAN SEASONS**
- VOL. 6: HOMELANDS**
- VOL. 7: ARABIAN NIGHTS (AND DAYS)**
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- VOL. 9: SONS OF EMPIRE**
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- VOL. 12: THE DARK AGES**
- VOL. 13: THE GREAT FABLES CROSSOVER**
- 1001 NIGHTS OF SNOWFALL**



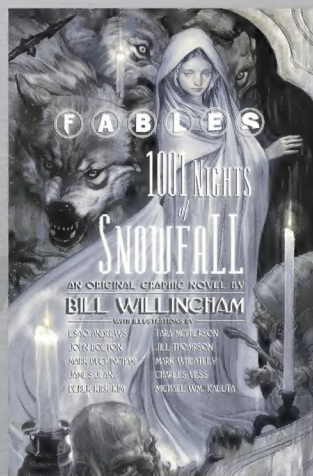
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